

## **Advocates Hail Bipartisan REPLANT Act as Urgent Investment Needed to Protect and Maintain Healthy Forests**

“We need immediate, bipartisan action to protect people and help slow climate change. Smart policy that embraces nature as a climate solution is integral to any comprehensive climate solution. This bill shows us how to use trees to do just that, removing carbon from the air, reforesting fire-scarred landscapes, and creating jobs. I am encouraged to see this bipartisan legislation introduced in both the House and Senate and look forward to advancing this critical policy.”

- ***Bill Lee, Senior Vice President of Policy, Advocacy and Government Affairs at The Trust for Public Land***

“Our national forests are suffering from climate-change induced wildfires, droughts, pests and other forest killers. The REPLANT Act would help make our forests healthy again by nearly tripling the rate of reforesting our national forests—to 1.2 billion trees every decade. And, as a much-needed bonus, it would help address two of the most pressing issues of the day: the economy and climate change. The REPLANT Act would create nearly 49,000 new jobs every decade and help capture carbon dioxide emissions equivalent to using more than 85 billion gallons of gas.”

- ***Jad Daley, President and CEO, American Forests***

“BPC Action commends Sens. Udall (D-NM) and Portman (R-OH) and Reps. Panetta (D-CA), Simpson (R-ID), LaMalfa (R-CA), and Schrier (D-WA) for introducing the Repairing Existing Public Land by Adding Necessary Trees (REPLANT) Act of 2020. The bill advances U.S. reforestation efforts that will help maintain and restore our national forests, generate economic opportunities in rural areas, and provide environmental and climate benefits through enhanced carbon sequestration, which are priorities of BPC’s Farm and Forest Carbon Solutions Initiative.

“The REPLANT Act requires the U.S. Forest Service to reduce a backlog of 1.3 million acres in need of reforestation within the next decade, with priority given to forests degraded or destroyed by wildfires and other unplanned events. Notably, the legislation removes the cap (currently set at \$30 million) on duties that USFS can take from specified wood products, meaning all duties will go to the Reforestation Trust Fund. This will modernize the fund and provide financial support for USFS to meet the reforestation backlog while maintaining current reforestation needs. We are glad to see congressional support for reforestation activities that will bolster rural communities and mitigate climate impacts. BPC Action looks forward to working with Congress to pass this bill.”

- ***Michele Stockwell, Executive Director, BPC Action***

“The Forest Stewards Guild is thrilled to see the bi-partisan support for the REPLANT Act. This common-sense legislation will be a win for forests, wildlife, water, the climate, and jobs because it will remove barriers to replanting forests lost to fire, insects, disease, and drought. Tree planting can be part of the restoration economy that supports rural communities while at the same time growing forests that benefit everyone.”

- ***Alexander ‘Zander’ Evans, PhD., Executive Director, The Forest Stewards Guild***

“Green Forests Work strongly supports the bipartisan REPLANT ACT, which will create much needed employment opportunities while improving the health and resiliency of our National Forests.”

- ***Michael French, Director of Operations, Green Forests Work***

“Our forests not only provide natural beauty and critical habitat for the birds we love, they are also vital to fight the effects of climate change. Healthy forests help provide a number of benefits including

removing harmful pollution by naturally storing carbon, and protecting water supplies. Audubon's own science shows that climate change is by far the biggest threat to birds. Modernizing the Reforestation Trust Fund will go a long way in restoring our national forests, and helping to create a cleaner future for both people and wildlife."

- ***Sarah Greenberger, vice president of conservation policy, National Audubon Society***

"The mission of The Longleaf Alliance is to ensure the sustainable future of the longleaf ecosystem through partnerships, landowner assistance, and science-based education and outreach. The US Forest Service (USFS) is a founding member and critical partner in our longleaf restoration efforts under America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative's (ALRI) goal of restoring 8 Million acres of longleaf pine by 2025. Of their 13.6-million-acre public land base in the southeast, the USFS currently manages 850,000+ acres of dominant longleaf. With the goal of putting an additional 1 million acres of suitable National Forest lands 'on the path' to longleaf pine, the Million Acre Challenge was launched by USFS in 2018. In just a few short years, an additional 457,000 acres of National Forest System lands are now on the path to longleaf dominance. Support provided through the REPLANT Act will ensure the success of this program that will expand acreage of longleaf pine on public lands and get us closer to ALRI's 8 million acre goal by 2025."

- ***Carol Denhof, President, The Longleaf Alliance***

"Our National Forest System is a beautiful gift from God, and we are thankful for Senators Udall (D, NM), Portman (R, OH), and Stabenow (D, MI) and Representatives Panetta (D, CA-20), Simpson (R, ID-2), Schrier (D, WA-8), and LaMalfa (R, CA-1) for introducing the REPLANT Act in a bipartisan and bicameral partnership that will protect and restore these special places. The REPLANT Act seeks to promote natural regeneration of 'priority land' that has been impacted by unplanned events such as wildfires and attacks by invasive species. These unplanned events not only impact available tree cover but harm ecosystems and reduce our natural resources. Reforesting these vulnerable swaths of land will help restore fragile ecosystems, capture carbon, clean the air, and defend the health of our most vulnerable populations. The REPLANT Act seeks to fulfill the biblical command to 'to work it and take care of' God's creation while also creating over 56,000 jobs in the next decade.

- ***Rev. Mitch Hescox, President/CEO, The Evangelical Environmental Network***

"The importance of forests to our health, our economy and our future cannot be overstated, and today's move improves on an already great idea. Removing the spending cap unlocks the potential for reforestation to improve air and water quality, protect habitats, expand outdoor recreation access and combat climate change. Our forests face many challenges, and with this legislation, we can rise to those challenges. The bipartisan support for this proposal demonstrates how scalable and effective reforestation can help tackle threats facing our natural world, and we appreciate the sponsors' commitment to investing in our forests."

- ***Kameran Onley, director of North American policy and government relations, The Nature Conservancy***

"America's forests provide essential wildlife habitat, protect healthy watersheds and clean drinking water, and serve as natural carbon-sinks — a vital climate solution. Investing in forest restoration and reforestation benefits wildlife and people alike. The National Wildlife Federation is grateful to Senators Udall, Portman, and Stabenow, and Congressmen Panetta, Simpson, Schrier, and LaMalfa, for their efforts to accelerate efforts to improve the health of our National Forests by making them more resilient to escalating impacts from megafires, drought, pests, and disease — all of which are exacerbated by climate change."

- ***Collin O'Mara, president and CEO, National Wildlife Federation***